



March 13, 2013

Mayor George Pradel and City Council
City of Naperville
400 S. Eagle Street
Naperville, IL 60540

Re: Motion of Substitution on Agenda Item J-1 and the Prohibition of Naming

Dear Mayor Pradel and Council Members:

On behalf of the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce and the 1,400 Members we represent, I am writing to object to a recent line of discussion that occurred over debate on Item J-1. Through a motion of substitution, the Council was debating the institution of a restriction of naming rights or abilities on certain businesses. The Chamber applauds that this anti-business motion was defeated.

The City of Naperville has a wide range of municipal authorities, duties and responsibilities. In our opinion, using the power of the government through zoning and regulatory approval processes to debate, manage the marketing affairs or place restrictions on the name of individual businesses is not wise or appropriate use of those powers.

The Council is expected to set policy and citywide regulations – and if that policy is unclear, unworkable, requiring too many variances or otherwise insufficient – then it is appropriate to revisit the issue and rewrite the underlying regulatory code. The Council is not elected to be a marketing committee for Naperville's private sector, or to individually review and bless the names and affairs of businesses at public meetings. This is an example of government overreach and undue regulation.

Does a plurality of the Council believe it is truly appropriate to begin prohibiting companies and organizations from using any part of the words "Naperville," "Main Street," "5th Avenue," "Riverwalk," or "Downtown," in their names? The list of potential restrictions could extend in perpetuity and without end. No reasonable individual would look at any business past, present or future, named "Naperville X," or "Riverwalk Y," to be an endorsed unit of the City of Naperville.

We respect that you have a responsibility to manage and protect the property of the municipal corporation, but businesses have the inherent ability to compete and exercise their inherent rights. The Chamber's role as the voice of the business community and defender of our Members' interests – and the narrow margin by which this anti-business measure was defeated – requires us to formally inform you of our objection.

In individual zoning matters – and on any issue before the Council – having the ability to exercise power, enact encumbrances, implement restrictions or impose taxes, does not inherently make it the right policy. We urge you to continue to use prudence and restraint in making decisions.

The **BusinessVoice**

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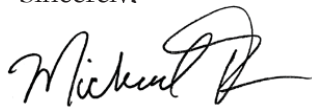
Last week's discussion was not consistent with the nature of partnership espoused so often by the Council and Mayor, past and present. The Riverwalk is a successful entity – and envied by so many communities because it is an attraction for businesses, residents and tourists alike. Without the proximity and support of a business district, municipal amenities like Centennial Beach or Library, and easy access to residences, it is simply a walkway made of bricks near a river.

These assets, reputations and experiences were built through partnership and investment of time, resources and support from the community, public and private, and belong to everyone. The notion that the City Council can or should license or declare ownership of these public-private partnerships is directly contradictory to the spirit in which they were established.

We respect that this discussion occurred after a long evening and that you may have not had the opportunity to fully reflect on the gravity and nature of the suggested policy. We appreciate your consideration of the Chamber's opinion and look forward to continuing our work together to improve the business climate, support economic growth and facilitate job creation. I welcome feedback or response to the points raised in this letter.

Please note that this letter was not sent at the request or coordination of any petitioner or potential petitioner before the Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" and "E".

Michael A. Evans
President & CEO
Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Board of Directors
Downtown Naperville Alliance